

project was stalled shortly thereafter, he became the region's Budget Officer for six years. Subsequently, from 1984 to early 1993, Tom was the Assistant Regional Director for Administration, overseeing such functions as personnel, budget, finance, procurement, and computer processing.

In 1993, Tom received his final and perhaps most challenging position with the Bureau—that of Manager of the Central California Area office. The area includes the Folsom and Nimbus Dams and the Folsom South Canal on the American River, New Melones Dam on the Stanislaus River, and Lake Berryessa located between Napa and Winters.

Mr. Speaker, many of the issues relating to the facilities and watersheds in the Central California Area have been controversial, yet Tom has constantly sought to serve the public's best interest. As a veteran of California's renowned water wars, Tom has frequently had to be a facilitator amongst numerous competing interests. Despite the challenging and often unpleasant nature of this position, he has weathered it with patience and a continuing willingness to stand on principle.

One such example that has been of special importance to me has been Tom's unwavering support of the Auburn Dam. For three decades, Tom has helped promote the need to build the Auburn Dam by championing its unmatched ability to provide flood protection, water supply, hydroelectric power, recreational opportunities, and environmental benefits. Tom rightly recognizes that the Auburn Dam is the only solution to the Sacramento region's water management needs, and he has been one of the few who has stood steadfast in that position despite the misguided opposition of those in the environmental community and from within the Bureau itself. Tom's commitment to the Auburn Dam is nothing less than a testament to his dedication to faithfully uphold the Bureau's mission of providing a reliable water supply to the West in the most efficient and effective way possible.

Tom has received several honors for his good work, including the National Administrative Support Units' Annual Award for Executive Leadership in 1991, Who's Who in Government Service in 1990, and the Interior Department's Meritorious Service Award in 1984.

As he retires from public service, Tom will be free to spend more time with his family, including his wife, Linda, his children, Joe and Me'Shay, his step-daughters, Jennifer and Lisa, and his five grandchildren. Also, he will have more time to pursue his oil painting and show his 1934 Ford hot rod. His family's gain is the public's loss.

Mr. Speaker, one thing is certain—Tom Aiken's expertise, cooperative attitude, clear thinking, and toughness will certainly be missed in California's water community.

THE SPECIAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES AMENDMENTS ACT OF 2003

SPEECH OF

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 20, 2003

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to submit the Department of Defense Inspector

General's public report on Richard Perle, an editorial from the Wall Street Journal, and a clip from The Washington Times.

[Editorial from the Wall Street Journal]

PERLE'S VINDICATION

One obligation of editors is to distinguish phony political scandal from the genuine article. On that standard, any number of writers and editors owe Richard Perle an apology.

The noted defense intellectual voluntarily resigned in March as chairman of the Pentagon's Defense Policy Board Advisory Committee after his enemies pumped up a few anecdotes into allegations about "conflicts of interest." The Pentagon's Inspector General has been investigating those charges and last week issued a report absolving Mr. Perle of even the "appearance" of impropriety.

The accusations, fanned by Michigan Democrat John Conyers, had received especially prominent coverage in the New Yorker magazine and the New York Times. They boiled down to the all-purpose Washington smear that Mr. Perle has exploited his position for personal financial gain. But Pentagon investigator Donald Horstman concluded in a letter to Mr. Perle that "all of your activities with respect to those private entities complied with statutory and regulatory standards." There were no "quid pro" offers or attempts to leverage his (unpaid) Pentagon access.

In Washington, of course, people are often run out of office merely for the "appearance" of a conflict of interest. But Mr. Horstman says he also examined that "more elusive issue" and concluded that Mr. Perle's "activities did not create such an appearance" under the "perspective of a reasonable person with knowledge of the relevant facts." Mr. Perle's accusers knew all the facts, so the only conclusion is that they are not "reasonable persons," which will not come as news to most of our readers.

Mr. Conyers is now trying to compound his political felony by proposing to close what he claims is a "loophole" that requires someone to work more than 60 days a year before certain, more stringent Pentagon ethics rules apply. But this would essentially bar anyone with private expertise from advising Defense officials even in a voluntary, unpaid capacity. How this would enhance U.S. national security is not obvious. Then again, U.S. security was the last thing on the mind of Mr. Perle's critics.

[From the Washington Times, Nov. 20, 2003]

WASHINGTON-STYLE POLITICS

I beg to differ with Greg Pierce's recent item "All-purpose smear" (Inside Politics, Nation, Tuesday), claiming that charges levied against former Defense Policy Board Advisory Committee Chairman Richard Perle were an "all-purpose Washington smear."

A close reading of the inspector general's report would indicate that Mr. Perle's conduct raises real conflict-of-interest issues. There is no doubt that Mr. Perle had an important role in shaping our nation's defense policy and heavily influenced the mobilization of our war machine in Iraq, along with all the defense contracts and profits that follow. The IG's report confirmed that while guiding this effort, Mr. Perle benefited financially by working for firms with major business before the Department of Defense.

The report notes that Mr. Perle appears to have represented Global Crossing and Loral in matters pending before the Defense Department, but escaped violations of the conflict-of-interest laws by virtue of the fact that he was considered to be in the board's employ less than the required 60-day period.

Mr. Perle went so far as to sign an affidavit claiming that his position as chairman of the Defense Policy Board gave him a "unique perspective on and intimate knowledge of national defense and security issues." The fact that the offending language subsequently was removed from the affidavit doesn't change the reality of the assertion or the awkwardness of the conflict.

My legislation responds to the loopholes highlighted by the IG's report by merely ensuring that persons such as the chairman of the Defense Policy Board are treated as if they worked for the government for 60 days.

This would ensure that persons awarded with the public trust through prominent public positions do not use that trust to feather their own nests financially. At a time when we are asking our soldiers to make so many sacrifices, I hardly think it is too much to ask the chairman of the Defense Policy Board to refrain from representing clients with financial interests before the Defense Department.

ALL-PURPOSE SMEAR

"One obligation of editors is to distinguish phony political scandal from the genuine article. On that standard, any number of writers and editors owe Richard Perle an apology," the Wall Street Journal says. "The noted defense intellectual voluntarily resigned in March as chairman of the Pentagon's Defense Policy Board Advisory Committee after his enemies pumped up a few anecdotes into allegations about 'conflicts of interest.' The Pentagon's inspector general has been investigating those charges and last week issued a report absolving Mr. Perle of even the 'appearance' of impropriety," the newspaper said in an editorial. "The accusations, fanned by Michigan Democrat John Conyers, had received especially prominent coverage in the New Yorker magazine and the New York Times. They boiled down to the all-purpose Washington smear that Mr. Perle has exploited his position for personal financial gain. But Pentagon investigator Donald Horstman concluded in a letter to Mr. Perle that 'all of your activities with respect to those private entities complied with statutory and regulatory standards.' There were no 'quid pro' offers or attempts to leverage his (unpaid) Pentagon access. 'Mr. Horstman says he also examined that 'more elusive issue' and concluded that Mr. Perle's 'activities did not create such an appearance' under the 'perspective of a reasonable person with knowledge of the relevant facts.' Mr. Perle's accusers knew all the facts, so the only conclusion is that they are not 'reasonable persons,' which will not come as news to most of our readers."

RECOGNIZING NATIONAL DIABETES MONTH

HON. JEB HENSARLING

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 21, 2003

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, this November, we recognize National Diabetes Month and renew our commitment to preventing and eradicating diabetes. Just last week, the Department of Health and Human Services announced that the number of Americans with diabetes rose to an all-time high. According to their report, an estimated 18.2 million Americans now have diabetes, more than 6 percent of the population.

Even more alarming is the fact that many Americans are unaware that they may be at

risk or already have diabetes. Recent research suggests that more than five million people have the disease but have not been diagnosed.

Another major cause of concern is the number of serious diabetes related illnesses. Diabetes is the leading cause of blindness among adults between 20 and 74 years of age. People with diabetes are also at higher risk for heart disease, kidney failure, extremity amputations, and other chronic conditions.

To ensure the future health of our Nation, we can safeguard our children and our families from diabetes by encouraging good health and regular exercise. Following the guidelines for good nutrition, getting physical exercise, and maintaining proper weight can help prevent diabetes and reduce the chance of severe complications.

As the sixth leading cause of death in the United States, finding a cure for diabetes is a top priority for medical researches. As a member of Congress, this year I supported legislation that included funding for important diabetes research and clinical testing. This year the House voted to provide \$1.6 billion for the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, which is \$47.2 million above fiscal year 2003. In addition, \$150 million in mandatory funds will be made available for juvenile diabetes research.

Through increased prevention and research we will overcome this disease and free millions of Americans from the threat of diabetes and related illnesses.

ANACOSTIA WATERSHED INITIATIVE ACT OF 2003

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Friday, November 21, 2003

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing the Anacostia Watershed Initiative Act of 2003. I am very pleased to be joined on the bill by several of my colleagues from the Washington region—Mr. HOYER, Mr. WYNN, Mr. MORAN, and Mr. VAN HOLLEN.

Although the beautiful Potomac, a river we also love, gets most of the attention in this region, it is the Anacostia that flows closest to the Congress and to the neighborhoods of the city and region. The Anacostia flows just 2,000 yards from the majestic Capitol Dome. The wastewater from the Capitol complex flows into the river when the ancient D.C. sewer system—built over the last century and a half—overflows on rainy days. The polluted runoff from congressional and federal parking lots and the fertilizers and pesticides from our magnificent lawns and gardens go into the Anacostia on those days as well. Many Members of Congress maintain a home in the Anacostia watershed. It is a sad fact that more than 30 years after the passage of the Clean Water Act, the Anacostia, despite its proximity to the Congress, remains badly contaminated with fecal bacteria, toxic chemicals, heavy metals, and many other pollutants. Contact with the water of the Anacostia isn't safe for human beings, there are official warnings not to eat fish caught in the river, and according to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, more than half of the bottom-feeding brown bullheads in the river have cancerous tumors caused by chemicals.

We're simply not doing a good job of taking care of our home river. The Anacostia has no treatment plants and very few small industrial sites. Federal agencies are the biggest polluters of the river. Nearly all of its pollution enters the river from public streets, storm drains, and sewers. These public systems—particularly the District's combined sewer—are old and inadequate and should have been upgraded years ago.

One of the many challenges in cleaning up the Anacostia is that five-sixths of the land area that contributes polluted water to it is within the state of Maryland, about a sixth of the total is owned and managed by the federal government. The residents of the District of Columbia especially feel the effects of the pollution. The result of that geography is that neither the District of Columbia nor any other single jurisdiction can achieve the cleanup of the river by itself. If we are to envision the day that the Anacostia can be a real asset for the entire Washington region extraordinary cooperation among the federal, state, and local governments will be required.

This is the purpose of the Anacostia Watershed Initiative Act of 2003. The bill that my colleagues and I are introducing today would bring together federal, state, District of Columbia and other local governments in a joint approach to cleaning up the river. It would set up a mechanism to develop, fund, and implement a 10-year Comprehensive Action Plan for the Anacostia watershed that would address both the District's outdated and inadequate combined sewer system and the runoff from federal facilities and other properties in Maryland. It would involve all the major players in a truly unified approach to cleaning up the home river of Congress.

This legislation has broad support, not only among members of congress, but from state and local officials, environmentalists, and the business community. With regional colleagues as original co-sponsors, I will work hard for the passage of the Anacostia Watershed Initiative Act of 2003 and know that our colleagues in the other body will work for it there, too. I urge all members of the House to join me in creating a Congressional home river that we can be truly proud of.

THE EMPLOYEE FREE CHOICE ACT

HON. GEORGE MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Friday, November 21, 2003

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, today I am joining with 81 of my colleagues to introduce the Employee Free Choice Act—legislation that will strengthen workers' rights in America.

Workers in America are demanding the same basic legal, labor and human rights by which we judge other nations around the world: the freedom of association and the right to collectively bargain.

These are the internationally-recognized standards our government says all workers deserve, whether in China or in Chattanooga, in Mexico or in Milwaukee, in South Africa or in South Carolina. We tell other nations that collective bargaining gives workers a voice in the workplace. It's time—in fact, it's way past time—for workers here in the United States to

have the same rights and protections we demand of poorer, less developed and less democratic nations around the world.

Unfortunately, the basic labor law that Congress enacted in 1935 no longer works to protect the right of workers to form and join unions. Recent history is littered with the stories of companies that defeated their workers when they sought to exercise their legal right to organize for their mutual benefit.

Something is obviously very wrong with our nation's labor laws when one side in a dispute has so many weapons at its disposal to thwart the will of the majority.

We are all aware of the egregious record of Wal-Mart, whose vigorous anti-union activities include threats and firings to unlawful surveillance. In the last few years, Wal-Mart has been charged with well over 100 unfair labor practices and has faced at least 50 formal complaints from the NLRB. None of this has apparently deterred Wal-Mart. Current law simply does not discourage lawbreakers.

In August 2000, Human Rights Watch, which usually reviews conditions in developing nations, documented "a systemic failure to ensure the most basic right of workers [in the United States]: their freedom to choose to come together to negotiate the terms of their employment with their employers." No impartial observer of our law could reach any other conclusion.

Is this the image of democracy that we choose to show to the rest of the world?

It is no mystery why workers want unions. The wages of union workers are 26% higher than for nonunion workers. Union workers have better pensions, better health benefits, and better short-term disability coverage. Union workers have contracts that prevent arbitrary firings.

So why do unions win only 50% of the elections? Because the deck is stacked against employees who want to form a union.

We propose a new deck. Not just a new deal.

The Employee Free Choice Act restores integrity to our labor law by ensuring that our own citizens have the same basic freedom we demand for others. The right to organize must mean more than the right to be fired for daring to propose a union, and the right to bargain collectively must mean more than the right to endlessly negotiate once a union has been selected.

Throughout my congressional career, I have fought to improve the rights of workers. With many of my colleagues I've fought for a larger minimum wage, protection for migrant workers, better education, and greater retirement security and health coverage. This fight is to enable workers to fight for themselves. It is an historic fight that I resolve to continue until the rights of working Americans are fully protected.

For the benefit of my colleagues, a short summary of the Employee Free Choice Act follows:

SUMMARY OF EMPLOYEE FREE CHOICE ACT 1. CERTIFICATION ON THE BASIS OF SIGNED AUTHORIZATIONS

Provides for certification of a union as the bargaining representative if the National Labor Relations Board finds that a majority of employees in an appropriate unit has signed authorizations designating the union as its bargaining representative. Requires the Board to develop model authorization